

# SCIENCE

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 25, 1899.

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## A PROBLEM IN AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGY.\*

WHILE engaged in writing the address which I am to read to you this evening the sad news reached me of the death, on July 31st, of our President of five years ago, Doctor D. G. Brinton. Although not unexpected, as his health had been failing since he was with us at the Boston meeting, where he took his always active part in the proceedings of Section H and gave his wise advice in our General Council, yet his death affects me deeply. I was writing on a subject we had often discussed in an earnest but friendly manner. He believed in an all-pervading psychological influence upon man's development, and claimed that American art and culture were autochthonous, and that all resemblances to other parts of the world were the results of corresponding stages in the development of man; while I claimed that there were too many root coincidences, with variant branches, to be fully accounted for without also admitting the contact of peoples. Feeling his influence while writing, I had hoped that he would be present to-night, for I am certain that no one would have more readily joined with me in urging a suspension of judgment, while giving free expression to opinions, until the facts have been worked over anew and more knowledge attained.

\* Address of the retiring President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, given at Columbus on August 21, 1899.

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